

freedom: our veterans, our men and women in uniform and their families wherever they go. God bless them. God bless America. Thank you all.

Now the House will continue to be led by a proud son of Ohio, a man of conviction and a public servant of resolve. Speaker BOEHNER is a leader who has earned the confidence of his conference and the respect of his colleagues on both sides of the aisle.

He is a man of faith: faith in God, faith in our country, and faith in his family. And as we congratulate him, we also congratulate and thank his wife, Debbie, and their two daughters, Lindsay and Trisha, and the entire Boehner family.

Speaker BOEHNER, I know all too well that we will not always agree, but I hope with all my heart that we will find common ground that is a higher, better place for our country.

□ 1400

Surely we can be touched by the better angels of our nature. Surely we can be touched by the better angels of our nature. So beautifully expressed by President Lincoln.

This is the people's House; this is the people's gavel. It represents a sacred trust. May we all fulfill that trust and make real the ideals of democratic government.

With respect for our Constitution, with faith in the American people, with hope for the future of our country, I present the people's gavel to the Speaker of the House, JOHN BOEHNER.

May God bless you.

May God bless you, Speaker BOEHNER. May God bless this Congress. May God always bless the United States of America.

My colleagues, the Speaker of the House, JOHN BOEHNER.

Mr. BOEHNER. Leader PELOSI, thank you for your kind words.

Members of the House, the Senate, my wife Debbie, who is with us today—thankfully the girls are working—and all of you and our fellow countrymen, we meet again at democracy's great port of call.

Every 2 years, at this hour, the Constitution brings a new order to this House, and it's an interlude for reflection, a glimpse of old truths. To our new Members and their families, let me just say "welcome."

I know you're feeling a bit awestruck at this moment. History runs through this building. Now you're among a select few to share in this privilege. For those of you who are returning, who've walked these aisles before, maybe it's time we get a little awestruck again.

The way our Founders envisioned it, the Republic would be led by citizens who recognize the blessings that we receive by governing ourselves, and it requires that we give something of ourselves. Everything depended on this. So they made each other and their successors swear an oath of allegiance.

In a few moments, I'll take this oath for the 12th time as the representative

from the Eighth District of Ohio. It is word for word the same oath that we all take. Note that it makes no mention of party or faction or title. It contains no reference to agendas or to platforms, only to the Constitution. The one addition we dare make, as George Washington did at the very first inaugural, is to invoke the assistance of our Heavenly Father.

This covenant makes us servants of posterity. It calls us to refuse the pull of passing interest and follow the fixed star of a more perfect union. Put simply, we're sent here not to be something, but to do something. Or as I like to call it, "doing the right thing."

It's a big job, and it comes with big challenges. Our government has built up too much debt. Our economy is not producing enough jobs. And these are not separate problems. At \$16 trillion and rising, our national debt is draining free enterprise and weakening the ship of state. The American Dream is in peril so long as its namesake is weighed down by this anchor of debt. Break its hold, and we begin to set our economy free, jobs will come home, and confidence will come back. We do this not just to boost GDP or reduce unemployment, but to secure for our children a future of freedom and opportunity, and, frankly, nothing is more important.

As Washington wrote in his farewell address, "We should not throw upon posterity the burden which we ourselves ought to bear." Well, that burden is ours, and so is the opportunity.

There's no substitute for the wisdom of the people. We here are their servants. As Speaker, I pledge to listen and to do all I can to help all of you carry out your oath of office that we're all about to take. Because in our hearts we know it's wrong to pass this debt on to our kids and our grandkids. Now, we have to be willing, truly willing to make this problem right.

Public service was never meant to be an easy living. Extraordinary challenges demand extraordinary leadership. So if you've come here to see your name in the lights or to pass off a political victory as some accomplishment, you've come to the wrong place. The door is right behind you. If you come here humbled by the opportunity to serve, if you've come here to be the determined voice of the people, if you've come here to carry the standard of leadership demanded not by our constituents but by the times, then you've come to the right place.

There is a time for every purpose under Heaven. For the 113th Congress, it is a time to rise. When the day is over and the verdict is read, maybe it's said that we well and faithfully did our duty to ensure that freedom will endure and prevail, so help us God.

I am now ready to take the oath of office.

I ask the Dean of the House of Representatives, the Honorable JOHN D. DINGELL of Michigan, to administer the oath of office.

Mr. DINGELL then administered the oath of office to Mr. BOEHNER of Ohio, as follows:

Do you solemnly swear or affirm that you will support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic; that you will bear true faith and allegiance to the same; that you take this obligation freely, without any mental reservation or purpose of evasion; and that you will well and faithfully discharge the duties of the office on which you are about to enter, so help you God.

(Applause, the Members rising.)

Mr. DINGELL. Congratulations, Mr. Speaker.

□ 1410

SWEARING IN OF MEMBERS

The SPEAKER. According to precedent, the Chair will swear in the Members-elect en masse.

The Members-elect will rise and raise their right hands.

The Members-elect rose, and the Speaker administered the oath of office to them as follows:

Do you solemnly swear or affirm that you will support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic; that you will bear true faith and allegiance to the same; that you take this obligation freely, without any mental reservation or purpose of evasion; and that you will well and faithfully discharge the duties of the office on which you are about to enter, so help you God.

The SPEAKER. Congratulations, you are now Members of the 113th Congress.

MAJORITY LEADER

Mrs. McMORRIS RODGERS. Mr. Speaker, as chair of the Republican Conference, I am directed by that conference to notify the House officially that the Republican Members have selected as majority leader the gentleman from Virginia, the Honorable ERIC CANTOR.

MINORITY LEADER

Mr. BECERRA. Mr. Speaker, as chairman of the Democratic Caucus, I have been directed to report to the House that the Democratic Members have selected as minority leader the gentlewoman from California, the Honorable NANCY PELOSI.

MAJORITY WHIP

Mrs. McMORRIS RODGERS. Mr. Speaker, as chair of the Republican Conference, I am directed by that conference to notify the House officially that the Republican Members have selected as majority whip the gentleman from California, the Honorable KEVIN MCCARTHY.

MINORITY WHIP AND ASSISTANT DEMOCRATIC LEADER

Mr. BECERRA. Mr. Speaker, as chairman of the Democratic Caucus, I